

**DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
BOARD OF PSYCHOLOGY**

**NEW REGULATION APPROVED:
Independent Learning Continuing Education**

The board would like to announce that the Office of Administrative Law approved proposed changes to the board's regulations, sections 1397.60(d) and (g), 1397.61(a) and 1397.62(c) and (d) of Division 13.1 of Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations, regarding distance learning continuing education.* These changes are effective on December 16, 2006 and applies to all renewing psychologists beginning with those whose license expiration date is December 31, 2006. Prior to approval of this regulation change, psychologists renewing their licenses were allowed to accrue up to 18 of the required 36 hours of continuing education via independent learning. With the new changes, psychologists will be allowed to accrue up to 27 hours (75%) of continuing education via independent learning each renewal cycle. Independent learning courses must meet all standards of an approved continuing education course and must be taken within the 24-month period immediately preceding the expiration date of the license.

*It should be noted that the old term "distance learning" is no longer used. The BOP has changed the language to refer to "independent learning" instead of distance learning. As shown below in the new regulation, "Independent learning" is defined as "the variety of forms of organized and directed learning experiences that occur when the instructor and the student are not in direct visual or auditory contact. These include, but are not limited to, courses delivered via the Internet, CD-ROM, satellite downlink, correspondence and home study. Self-initiated, independent study programs without an approved CE sponsor are not acceptable for continuing education."

The language to amend sections 1397.60(d) and (g), 1397.61(a) and 1397.62(c) and (d) of Division 13.1 of Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations, reads as follows:

§1397.60. Definitions.

(d) "Continuing education" means the variety of forms of learning experiences, including, but not limited to, lectures, conferences, seminars, workshops, grand rounds, in-service training programs, video conferencing, and ~~distance~~ independent learning technologies.

(g) "~~Distance~~ Independent learning" means the variety of forms of organized and directed learning experiences that occur when the instructor and the student are not in direct visual or auditory contact. These include, but are not limited to, courses delivered via the Internet, CD-ROM, satellite downlink, correspondence and home study. Self-initiated, independent study programs without an approved CE sponsor are not acceptable for continuing education. Except for qualified individuals with a disability who apply to and are approved by the board pursuant to section 1397.62(c), ~~distance independent~~ learning can be used to meet no more than ~~50% (18 hours)~~ 75% (27 hours) of the continuing education required in each renewal cycle. ~~Distance Independent~~ Independent learning courses must meet all standards of an approved continuing education course.

Authority cited: Sections 2915(g) and 2930, Business and Professions Code. Reference: Sections 29 and 2915, Business and Professions Code.

§1397.61. Continuing Education Requirements.

(a) Except as provided in section 2915(e) of the Business and Professions Code and section 1397.62 of these regulations, each licensed psychologist shall submit with the application for license renewal proof satisfactory to the board that he or she has completed the continuing education requirements set forth in section 2915 of the code. A licensee who renews his or her license for the first time after the initial issuance of the license is only required to accrue continuing education for the number of months that the license was in effect, including the month the license was issued, at the rate of 1.5 hours of approved continuing education per month. Continuing education earned via ~~distance~~ independent learning pursuant to section 1397.60(g) shall be accrued at no more than ~~50%~~ 75% of the continuing education required for the first time renewal. The required hours of continuing education may not be accrued prior to the effective date of the initial issuance of the license. A licensee who falsifies or makes a material misrepresentation of fact on a renewal application or who cannot verify completion of continuing education by producing verification of attendance certificates, whenever requested to do so by the board, is subject to disciplinary action under section 2960 of the code.

Authority cited: Sections 2915(g) and 2930, Business and Professions Code. Reference: Sections 29, 2915 and 2915.7, Business and Professions Code.

§1397.62. Continuing Education Exemptions and Exceptions.

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(c) Psychologists requiring reasonable accommodation according to the Americans with Disabilities Act may be granted an exemption from the on-site participation requirement and may substitute all or part of their continuing education requirement with an American Psychological Association or accreditation agency approved ~~distance~~ independent learning continuing education program. A qualified individual with a disability must apply to the board to receive this exemption.

(d) Any licensee who submits a request for an exemption or exception which is denied by the board shall complete any continuing education requirements within 120 days of the notification that the request was denied.

Authority cited: Sections 2915(g) and 2930, Business and Professions Code. Reference: Section 2915, Business and Professions Code.